CCTV And False Rape Claims

By VennerRoad, 13th Jul 2016

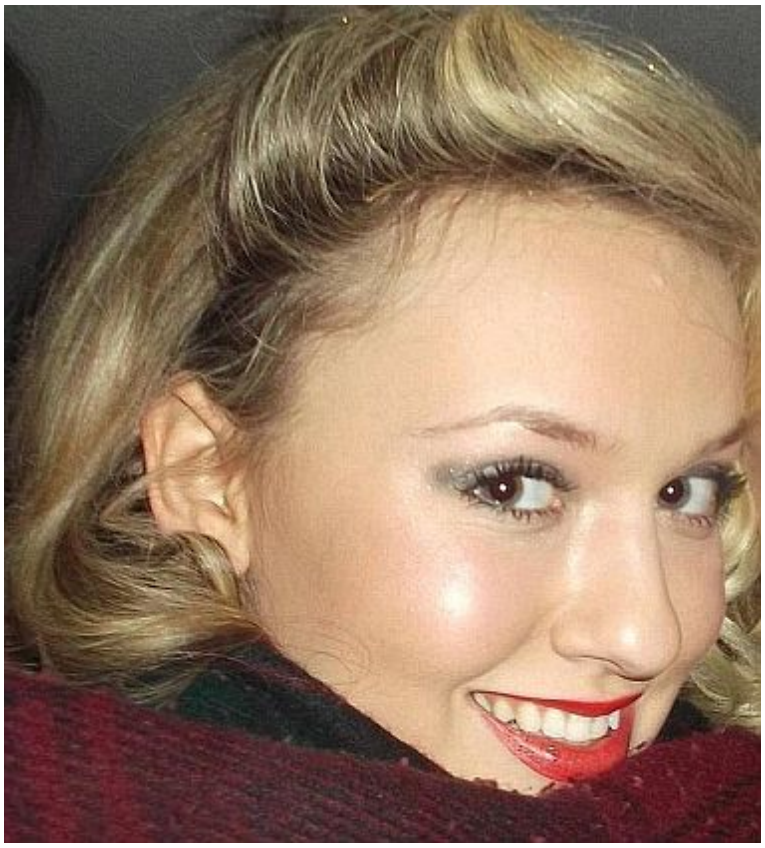
In the modern world, cameras are watching our every move. That is the bad news; the good news is that some people are glad they are.

The slow march of total surveillance has long been of concern to civil libertarians, but as many ordinary people have come to realise in recent years, it has a distinct up side. Now that most of us are walking around with phones in our pockets that can upload images and videos, sharing them with the world within seconds, it is not only that state that is watching us but we who are watching it, as many police officers have discovered to their cost.

CCTV has been around for quite a bit longer, although it was only really in the late 1980s, early 90s that the price dropped sufficiently to make it affordable for all but governments and larger organisations. Along with the plummeting cost has come increased quality, which has been instrumental in bringing serious criminals including murderers to book. Those of a certain age will remember that iconic and later chilling image of 2 year old James Bulger being walked from a Merseyside shopping centre by two 10 year old boys who would snuff out his life in a crime that would have been shocking had it been committed by a deranged adult.

It is though not only the guilty CCTV has been used to indict, but the innocent it has been used to exculpate. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that over the past three decades and more there have been men walking our streets who but for CCTV would be serving thousands of years in prison, most notably for rape. The following handful of examples are in chronological order.We begin with a case that was decided in a civil court, in particular the utterly bizarre allegations of Lynn Walker against Michael Garfoot. It began with her accusing her co-worker of simply putting his hand up her skirt.

At one time this sort of behaviour would have warranted a slapped face, but nowadays it is likely to result in the accused ending up on the *Sex Offenders Register*, that is if the accuser is believed. Whether or not she was, their employer, the pharmaceutical giant Boots, suspended Mr Garfoot. She went on to accuse him of *almost* raping her, which appears to have dented her credibility, because Mr Garfoot's suspension was lifted, and he was moved to another branch. That might have been the end of the matter, but the *almost* rape became actual rape then oral rape.



False rape accuser Eleanor de Freitas.

A sexual assault of this gravity should be reported to the police, but Lynn Walker was content simply to defame her victim continuously, which resulted in him suing for defamation. CCTV and other evidence demonstrated overwhelmingly that the only place these sexual assaults happened was in her head. It remains to be seen if she was simply lying, gaga, or a combination of both, but the £400,000 award by the jury appears to have shut her up.

A far less complex case was that of teenager Matthew Hilliard standing trial for rape at Newcastle Crown Court in May 1999. He was alleged to have dragged a girl out of a nightclub and raped her twice. On the second day of the trial, a video came to light that showed her leaving the club with him "as happy as Larry", rather than as she had claimed. The judge was not amused, and halted the trial.

Andrew Bond found himself in even deeper water when he was accused of raping a woman in his apartment. They'd met in a bar then gone back to his place where they'd had sex. For whatever reason she regretted what she had done, upped and left, but instead of simply writing off the evening as a negative experience she went to a relative's house nearby where she claimed she had been raped. She looked the part down to her torn underwear. She told the police that back at his place he had emerged naked from the bathroom, dragged her into the bedroom and raped her, but she had managed to escape.

The case against him looked strong, and he was charged with rape, but on the eve of the trial, a member of his defence team found an incredible piece of CCTV evidence from the elevator of his apartment block. The woman was seen to pull her knickers out of her handbag and begin tearing them. The case never went to trial, but neither was this woman prosecuted for perverting the course of justice or for anything else.

An even more outrageous false rape allegation was thwarted by CCTV evidence later the same year. When Alison Welfare decided to frame her former lover Christopher Wheeler, she began by reporting him to the police for harassing her. Ten days later she went to the Internet caff and sent herself menacing text messages. Finally, she was found in the restroom of a South London fastfood restaurant looking not only

like a rape victim but a kidnap victim into the bargain. Her story was that she had been snatched by two men, violated and dumped there.

Christopher Wheeler was arrested; there was certainly evidence that a serious crime had been committed, and he ended up behind bars for two months while the police built a case against him. When they got round to checking the CCTV, they saw the "victim" walking into the toilet alone! If Mr Wheeler had been convicted, he would have been looking at an absolute minimum of ten years, perhaps a great deal more, but when Welfare appeared at Blackfriars Crown Court in August 2003, she received a mere 12 month sentence.

Finally, a case that made national headlines and resulted in two trials, neither of them for rape. In December 2012, Alexander Economou had what he called a fling with Eleanor de Freitas. Some might have considered them a dream couple, the handsome, intelligent charismatic and wealthy businessman on the one hand, and the bubbly girl with "breasts to die for" on the other. But something about Eleanor de Freitas didn't add up, and after running her name through his search engine, the businessman concluded that she was a prostitute. She certainly appeared to be working in the sex industry; call him a prude if you wish, but he didn't feel she was the sort of girl he could take home to meet mother, and broke off their relationship.

As the man said, Hell hath no fury...and on January 4 the following year she went to the police accusing him of drugging and raping her. He was arrested, and doubtless had visions of his life crumbling around him. Released on bail he decided not to wait for the police to complete their investigation, and if the experience of Andrew Bond is anything to go by, with good reason. But how does a man prove he didn't drug and rape a woman? Proving a negative is extremely difficult, but would she have gone shopping with him afterwards? According to feminists, yes, but sane people tend to take a slightly different view. When he dug out the CCTV, the case against him looked extremely weak, and this coupled with the fact that earlier in 2012 she had accused another man of rape, *and* that she had accused her own parents of trying to poison her...

Not content simply to have the charges dropped, he wanted her pro-

secuted for making a false and malicious allegation, putting his money where his mouth was. The prosecution went ahead, or would have done, but Eleanor de Freitas decided she couldn't face the *ordeal*, and hanged herself shortly before she was to stand trial. Obviously that was a tragedy, but it was one of her own making. Apologists for Eleanor de Freitas claim she was vulnerable – which means what exactly? And that because she was *mentally ill* she should not have faced prosecution. Eleanor de Freitas had what is fashionably called bipolar disorder but used to be called mania. This is a state of mind, not an illness of mind, and even if it were, should this be a get out of jail free card? The man who is currently facing trial for the murder of the MP Jo Cox has been called mentally ill. Does that mean he should be released and offered counselling as in the de Freitas case? Will some people forever deny female evil?

All the above cases are from England, but CCTV has saved innocent men from prison and lifelong stigmatisation the world over. Many such cases from the USA to India to Australia can be found on the International False Rape Timeline.

https://www.infotextmanuscripts.org/wikinut/wikinut-cctv-and-false-rape-claims.html